

Illinois River

Watershed Walk About

Watersheds are areas of land that drain into a lake or a river. They provide drinking water, irrigation, beauty, recreation and wildlife habitat.

Use the map of the Illinois River Watershed on the reverse side to complete the following investigations:

Watershed Area (km squared)
Illinois River Length (km)
Number of reservoirs in watershed
Population in watershed
Number of Cities
Number of basins
Names, contacts of watershed partnerships

1. What tributary flows through Rogers, Arkansas, and flows underneath I-540?
2. Which tributary was dammed to create Lake Fayetteville in Fayetteville, Arkansas?
3. Find where you are right now. What tributary to the Illinois River is nearest to your location?
4. What large river does the Illinois River flow into at its mouth?
5. What highway is near the confluence (joining) of Flint Creek and the Illinois River?

6. If you live in Farmington, Arkansas, what is one tributary that you might choose to protect



beautiful picture, to come, will slot in above.

Recreational/scenic points of interest:

Twin Falls at Watts, Oklahoma Public Access Area

Peavine Hollow Public Access, OK

Hwy 62, Northeast of Tahlequah, OK

Sparrowhawk Loop at Sparrowhawk Mountain, OK

Horseshoe Bend and Carter's Landing (Hwy 82), OK

Lake Fayetteville, AR

Hwy 16 Southeast of Siloam Springs, AR

Data Collection (Use the metric system!)

1. Use a ruler or meter stick to estimate the distance between the mouth of the Illinois River in Oklahoma and its headwaters that begin near Lincoln, Arkansas.
2. Count the number of cities that are located within the Illinois River Watershed.
3. How many reservoirs are found in the Illinois River Watershed.
4. Estimate the number of sub-basins found in the Illinois River Watershed.
5. Measure the length of Crazy Creek in the northern part of the watershed.
6. If the water is flowing at 3 m/s, how long will it take for one molecule to travel from the headwaters of Crazy Creek to the mouth of Crazy Creek?

Choose one tributary of the Illinois River and determine its length, discharge (flow rate), and its latitude and longitude.

Illinois River Watershed Partnership -- www.irwp.org • Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Commission -- www.oklahomascenicrivers.net • Oklahoma Water Resources Board -- www.owrb.state.ok.us

Materials

Large tub
Newspapers
Cotton balls/tissue
White trash bags
Spray bottle
Food coloring (two colors)
Water
Notebook paper

Procedures

1. Wad up newspaper pages and place in tub.
2. Put the tub and crumpled newspaper into a white trash bag.
3. Push the bag down in between the newspaper "mountains."
4. Place two drops of food coloring into a spray bottle full of water.
5. Spray water onto your "landform" and determine where the watersheds are.
6. Place food coloring
7. Place the cotton ball in the landform.
8. Spray the landform.

Questions

1. What does the spraying represent?
2. What does the newspaper represent?
3. How many watersheds did your landform have?
4. What does the cotton ball represent?

A watershed is an area of land that receives rainfall that drains to a river, lake or wetland. You're sitting in a watershed right now!

Land use activities can impact watershed water quality because precipitation causes stormwater runoff to wash contaminants (such as soil, fertilizers, bacteria, etc.) into watershed water resources. If you live in Northwest Arkansas or Northeast Oklahoma, you may have impacted the Illinois River Watershed and didn't know it. You've definitely contributed to a watershed, somewhere, in some way.

It is important to think about the potential impact of your decisions and actions. For example, when washing your car in the driveway, the dirty, soapy wash water flows untreated through a storm drain into a nearby creek. It is better to wash the car on your lawn so the water will filter down through the soil or use a commercial car wash where the water is treated. Simple actions like testing soils to apply fertilizers precisely, fixing automotive leaks, picking up pet waste and retaining soil on construction sites can help protect water quality and aquatic wildlife.